

Characteristic of Gluten-Free Products: Latvian Consumer Survey

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Abstract : Celiac disease is a permanent enteropathy caused by the ingestion of gluten, a protein occurring in wheat, rye and barley. The only way of the effective daily treatment is a strict gluten-free diet. From the investigation of products available in the local market, it was found that Latvian producers do not offer gluten-free products. The aim of this research was to study and analyze changes of celiac patient's attitude to gluten-free product quality and availability in the Latvian market and purchasing habits. The survey was designed using website www.visidati.lv, and a questionnaire was sent to people suffering from celiac disease. The first time the respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire in 2011, but now repeatedly from the beginning of September 2013 till the end of January 2014. The questionnaire was performed with 75 celiac patients, respondents were from all Latvian regions and they answered 16 questions. One of the most important questions was aimed to find out consumers' opinion about quality of gluten-free products, consumption patterns of gluten-free products, and, moreover, their interest in products made in Latvia. Respondents were asked to name gluten-free products they mainly buy and give specific purchase locations, evaluate the quality of products and necessity for products produced in Latvia. The results of questionnaire show that the consumers are satisfied with the quality of gluten-free flour, flour blends, sweets and pasta, but are not satisfied with the quality of bread and confectionery available in the Latvian markets.

Keywords : consumers, gluten-free products, quality, survey

Conference Title : ICFSN 2014 : International Conference on Food Science and Nutrition

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : June 29-30, 2014